

Sinclair Broadcasting's decision to force their stations to air an anti-Kerry documentary days before the election is a clear example of the dangers of media consolidation.

Months ago Sinclair Broadcasting refused to air a Nightline program where the names of soldiers who had died in the ongoing war in Iraq were read out loud. Sinclair attempted to defend their decision by claiming the Nightline program was "too political."

It seems Sinclair's definition of "too political" only references programs that might be interpreted as critical of the current administration. Airing a propaganda piece critical of Senator Kerry days before the election is clearly a partisan political decision.

Sinclair uses the public airwaves free of charge, and is obligated by law to serve the public interest. But when large companies control the airwaves, we get more of what's good for the bottom line and less of what we need for our democracy. Instead of something produced at "News Central" far away, it's more important that we see real people from our own communities and more substantive news about issues that matter.

Sinclair's actions show why we need to strengthen media ownership rules, not weaken them. They show why the license renewal process needs to involve more than a returned postcard.

Thank you for your attention to this gross and flagrant abuse of our public airwaves.